



## The Phoenix Family Readiness Group Newsletter

### 1<sup>st</sup> Special Troops Battalion, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (M)

1st Edition, Issue 5 ~ 22 September – 5 November 2005



Families, friends and fellow soldiers of the Phoenix Battalion:

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. In this issue, we will look at some key dates, hear from the Commanders, meet the new Battalion Executive Officer MAJ Devin Ruhl and take a look at some of the FRGs goals.

#### **BN Summary**

Over the past several months the 1<sup>st</sup> Special Troops Battalion has begun making a name for itself. We were recently recognized as the best Special Troops Battalion in the Division and the best Special Troops Battalion ever to visit the National Training Center. Not only this, we have begun to make our own mark in history, literally writing our history as we go.

As for deployment, the Milvans have been packed and shipped, the vehicles are loaded on the rail moving to the port and the last six months of training has prepared us for our mission in Iraq.

#### **Maj Devin Ruhl**

Our new Battalion Executive Officer is Major Devin Ruhl. He is originally from Hannibal, Missouri and attended NE Missouri State University. After attending the Engineer Officers Basic course at Ft. Leonardwood in summer of 1990 he report to the 237<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion in Heilbronn, Germany. He has since served at Ft. Knox, Ft. Lewis, Ft. Leavenworth and has been stationed at Ft. Hood since 2003. He has served in duties ranging from Platoon Leader to Division Engineer Staff and

Commanded two Companies. He has deployed to Kosovo and OIF 1. He is joined here with his wife, Sarah, who hails from



Above: Maj Ruhl hard at work after hours. England and his three children, Samuel (8), Aidan (6) and Bailey (2).

#### **Alpha**

Greetings to the friends and family of the Nighthawks and the Phoenix Battalion. As you all know, the last several months have been extremely busy with NTC and our deployment preparations for Iraq. The training we conducted in September will soon prove to be invaluable, as our soldiers will put their skills to work in Iraq. As we conduct our intelligence missions and train the Iraqi Army, rest assured that we are prepared and will serve with distinction and pride.

Our company has seen many improvements and upgrades in our equipment, to include the RQ-7B Tactical

## Unmanned Ariel Vehicle and the M1114



Above: Soldiers from the Battalion receive impact awards at the National Training Center

Up-armored HMMWV. This vehicle, equipped with heavy armor and protection for the gunner, will be our primary means of transportation around Iraq.

Thank you all for your patience during these hectic times. Your support is one of the most powerful weapons that we have, and we will always keep you all close to our hearts. I intend to write from Iraq to keep you informed and let you know what a great job your loved ones are doing. Sleep peacefully knowing that we are helping provide security for our future and that of our great nation. The professional warriors of Alpha Company will not let you down.

**NIGHTHAWKS!**

## **Bravo**

Bravo Company soldiers performed exceedingly well during the month of October. The Company supported the entire Brigade during the DIGEX and validated JNN equipment for OIF. SFC Guillory and SFC Gonzalez did an outstanding job running the Battalion's 1STB M-16 range. Congratulations to SGT Bell on your promotion. Bravo Company welcomed many new soldiers in October. Welcome PFC Birk, PV2 Mann, PFC Greer and PVT

Gray. Thanks for all the hard work, be safe, and take care of our soldiers and families

## **HHD**

The containers are packed, and by the time you read this our vehicles will be on trains headed to the ports. The Renegades are ready to go! Now all that remains is some individual training and, hopefully, a little more time with our families before we leave.

The company has done a great job getting ready. We've gotten a lot of new Soldiers into the company, and we want to make sure they and their families feel welcome. The company FRG is hosting a company farewell party on November 18<sup>th</sup> at the Belton Lakeview Park from 1600-1900.

This is a chance for Renegades and their families to get together and have fun outside of work and we hope to see all of them there.

## **HHC**

HHC 1STB is now formally known as the Ravens. We have changed our unit's mascot to bring it in-line with the Battalion's other units who all use birds of prey for mascots. The company has also adopted the motto "Live with honor" to reflect the moral imperative that we as soldiers attempt to achieve in our daily lives.

HHC 1STB continues to work hard knocking down one target after another in our preparation for deployment. This past month has been extremely hectic as we completed redeployment operations following NTC and began our preparations for deployment to Iraq. All of our equipment has now been shipped to Iraq, and we are completing the final phases of our training plans prior to deploying.

To all of our soldiers and family members, your hard work is greatly appreciated. To the new family members

and soldiers who have joined our team in the past two months, I would like to extend a



Above: The Battalion Commanders Personal Security Detachment (PSD)

gracious welcome. As Thanksgiving Day approaches, let us remember all we have to be thankful, including our freedom. The very right we are trying to share with the people of Iraq.

Ravens....live with honor.

## **FRG**

The Phoenix Battalion FRG has three primary goals. The first of those three is to have the capability to contact 100% of dependants. This capability would allow the FRG to ensure that all important information can be distributed and that contact can be made in case of an incident. The best way to get this capability is ensuring that all alert rosters and contact sheets are completed and current. If you haven't filled out a contact sheet please contact your FRG leader. The second goal is to ensure that we have trained POC's, Points of Contact, to assist the FRG leaders in notification and distribution of information by calling and emailing. If you would like to volunteer please contact your FRG leader. The third goal is to establish trained and reliable Care teams.

A Care team is a Pre-assigned Family Readiness Group of volunteers (prior

establishment of teams and coordination with RDO enhances team ability to support) that usually comes from the same battalion or company FRG as the Soldier and family. They offers short term care and support to families of deceased Soldiers or family members, they can also assist with families of critically wounded Soldiers or family members.

The CARE teams can offer support, comfort, meals, childcare and home care assistance. They can collect assistance information (i.e. sketch map to home, "best friend" or "key friend") information from unit family members and shares this info with the Rear-D prior to deployment and coordinates with other CARE Teams to provide collateral support when needed.

The Care team is notified after the next of kin and generally offers rapid initial assistance, but can continue to provide support as needed.

## **Predeployment Briefs**

The Battalion conducted two successful predeployment briefs on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October, but don't worry. If you missed those briefs you will have another chance. We have scheduled briefs at 1000 and 1830 on 1 December at the 25<sup>th</sup> Street Chapel; we encourage everyone to come out.

## **Newsletter Access**

These Newsletters are accessible via the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division website. To access the Battalion webpage with links to Battalion history, the FRG page and information about the Battalion's Crest /Insignia, Mission and contact information. Go to [www.hood.army.mil](http://www.hood.army.mil), on the right under Major Unit's click on 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, once you are at the Division webpage, click on Units, then 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade



and 1<sup>st</sup> STB at the bottom. This will allow you access to all of the Battalion's links.



Above: Mechanics from HHC, SPC Jackson and Harvey take a moment to pose in the dust bowl.

## PHOENIX 6

Hooah! The battalion did a fantastic job at the National Training Center (NTC) and was recognized for excellence by our Commanding General, MG Thurman. The soldiers worked and trained hard and the results clearly showed. I am very proud of each of our soldiers and the effort they put into training and learning as we went through a very intensive month of training in the Desert. In addition to the success on the battlefield, we were the 1<sup>st</sup> STB in the Army to place a rock at the NTC "rock pile". The rock pile at NTC is a special place that can be seen as you drive on to FT Irwin. Great units that have trained at the NTC paint and place a rock with their unit motto and crest so that they will be remembered. When the battalion goes back to NTC for more training the rock is updated with the new training dates. A great way to remember a fantastic battalion and a truly superb training rotation.

Welcome to over 90 new soldiers that have joined the unit since NTC. We will have another round of deployment briefs on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December for all the new families and

soldiers and any one who may have missed the first one.

As we prepare to deploy, I again would like to thank all of the soldiers and families for their devotion and sacrifice. It is tough to be a soldier and even tougher to be a family member. I would ask that each of the family members support their soldier and the battalion and keep us in your thoughts and prayers as we prepare to move out.

**Phoenix!**



Above: Soldiers standing with "The Rock" that we placed in NTC's history.



## To Dare Is To Do

Larry A. Seaman  
Command Sergeant Major  
U.S. Army

John W. Cross  
LTC, EN  
Commanding

*Next Issue: In the next issue we will farewell the battalion, and talk about the FRG and the Rear Detachment.*